



Donald Schafer  
Chief Judge

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Court Administrator / Clerk of Court

## **JOHNS CREEK MUNICIPAL COURT COVID-19 PANDEMIC OPERATING GUIDELINES**

### **PURPOSE**

The City of Johns Creek Municipal Clerk of Court's office is open to the public as of June 19, 2020. The City of Johns Creek Municipal Court will resume Court sessions on July 7, 2020. For the duration of the COVID-19 pandemic, we will continue to operate in a manner consistent with the guidance and recommended best practices issued by the Georgia Supreme Court's Emergency Judicial Order pursuant to O.C.G.A. §38-3-61 dated June 12, 2020 in addition to all extensions thereafter, the Council of Municipal Court Judges, the Centers for Disease Control Prevention (CDC) and the Georgia Department of Public Health (GDPH).

To accomplish this objective, these COVID-19 pandemic operating guidelines detail the specific steps the Court is taking to safeguard the staff and the public's health and wellbeing, while ensuring the Court maintains its daily operations and services. In addition, these guidelines provide direction on how the Court will respond to defendants with varying challenges produced by the pandemic as well as an opportunity to handle their judicial matter safely and efficiently.

### **SECTION I: EXTENDED COURT CALENDARS, RESCHEDULED COURT NOTICES AND COVID-19 GUIDELINES INFORMATION MAILED TO DEFENDANTS**

1. Additional Court sessions and Court times have been added to maintain the recommended six (6) feet safe distancing between defendants, the public, and Court staff. The Court will insist on compliance with social distancing guidelines.
2. Beginning January 2021, Court arraignments will be held each Tuesday at 8:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m.
3. Court trials will be held on a Wednesday each quarter at 8:30 a.m. and 2:00 p.m.
4. Persons are asked to bring his/her rescheduled notice with them to Court.
5. Due to social distancing guidelines, seating in the Courtroom has become limited. Therefore, one seat has been reserved for the person who received the citation. Defendants under the age of 21 may bring one (1) parent or guardian to attend the Court hearing with them, but please be advised that this is not required by law. Otherwise, we ask that you not bring additional support persons with you during this time.
6. In an effort to comply with social distancing guidelines, Courtroom occupancy will be limited to twenty-five (25) individuals, in order to maintain a seated distance of six (6) feet apart. Floor markings and signs shall be installed to assist people to maintain social distancing.

### **MUNICIPAL COURT**

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7. As a safety precaution, please do not bring infants or children to Court. If childcare is an issue, please contact the Court Clerk's office at 678-512-3444 or email the Court at [Court@johnscreekga.gov](mailto:Court@johnscreekga.gov) to request a one-time courtesy rescheduling of your case.
8. If you are a non-English speaker and require the services of an interpreter, please email the Court at [Court@johnscreekga.gov](mailto:Court@johnscreekga.gov) or call the Court Clerk's office at 678-512-3444 and leave a message. You must contact the Court prior to the date and time noted on the Court notice to allow Court personnel time to reschedule your hearing to a date where an interpreter will be available to assist you.
9. In an effort to maintain an open Courtroom and provide public access to the Courtroom, live streaming of each Court session will be published on the City's website.

## **SECTION II: PROCEDURES AT COURT BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER EACH COURT SESSION**

1. All Court participants must be checked in by Court security personnel. Court times have been staggered, and you will be allowed to check in at the security check point only a few minutes before your scheduled Court time. Court security will not allow a Court participant in the Courtroom before his/her scheduled Court time. If you arrive late and/or miss your Court date and time, you will be referred to the Court Services window so your case can be rescheduled for a new Court date in the future.
2. Persons who have been asked to wait in his/her vehicle will be required to sign in and provide a cellular contact number to be notified via text or phone call when their case is called before the Court.
3. All persons with Court business are required to wear his/her own personal mask upon entering City Hall and the Courtroom.
4. Your temperature may be taken upon entering City Hall, and if you have a temperature higher than the CDC guidelines, you will not be allowed in the Courtroom, you will be referred to the Court Clerk's office so your case can be rescheduled for a new Court date in the future.
5. You may be asked to sign a statement relating to certain health-related questions before entering the Courtroom. Depending on your answers, you may or may not be allowed in the Courtroom. If you are not allowed in the Courtroom, you will be referred to the Clerk's Office so your case can be rescheduled for a new Court date in the future.
6. You may be asked to sanitize your hands.
7. The Courtroom will be sanitized between each Court session.
8. Failure to appear in Court or pay your citation prior to Court may result in a warrant being issued and your driver's license submitted to the Georgia Department of Driver Services for suspension.

### **MUNICIPAL COURT**



9. Most citations can be paid online at [www.johnscreekga.gov](http://www.johnscreekga.gov) or via the automated phone system by calling 1-844-299-6427.
10. In the event you are sick or do not feel comfortable appearing in Court, please contact us at 678-512-3444 or email us at [Court@johnscreekga.gov](mailto:Court@johnscreekga.gov), and we will make other alternatives available to you.
11. As outlined in the Ninth Judicial Order, with regard to everyone who works in a court facility shall require isolation of any person with known or suspected Covid-19 and quarantine of any person with Covid-19 exposure likely to result in infection, in accordance with the DPH Ninth Amended Administrative Order for Public Health Control Measures.
12. When there is reason to believe that anyone who works at or has visited a court facility has been exposed to Covid-19, DPH or the local health department shall be notified, and notification of persons who may have been exposed shall occur as directed by DPH or the local health department.

### **SECTION III: PROCEDURES DURING NON-COURT DAYS**

1. When Court is not in session, the Clerk's Office will be open to the public Monday – Friday from 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
2. To minimize in-person contact, individuals are encouraged to:
  - a. Email Court personnel at [Court@johnscreekga.gov](mailto:Court@johnscreekga.gov) or call 678-512-3444;
  - b. Make payment of fines online at <https://www.johnscreekga.gov/residents/municipal-Court/pay-traffic-ticket> or by phone at 1-844-299-6427 if payable without appearing in Court;
  - c. Requests for dispositions can be requested by e-mail at [Court@johnscreekga.gov](mailto:Court@johnscreekga.gov) ;
  - d. City Open Records Request can be made online at <https://www.johnscreekga.gov/services-resources/forms/city-city-clerk/request-public-records>.
3. Operating guidelines will be posted on the City's website, the lobby of City Hall, Court Services area and near the entrance of the Courtroom.

(Updated 12/15/2020)

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